

P.O. BOX 102, LAUREL, DE 19956



LAURELDEHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

Winter 2026

NEWSLETTER

President's Note | *George Denney*

Happy New Year! The exterior restoration at the Hitchens Homestead and Rosemont is coming to an end. Please stop by to view the magnificent work that has been completed over the last two years. I'm certain you will agree the restoration is fabulous! Our thanks to Joseph Builders for an outstanding job—and, of course, many thanks to our project chairman, Ned Fowler, who has unselfishly given hundreds of hours to both projects. Thanks, Ned!

We were delighted to host a reception at Rosemont in November to celebrate the reinterpretation of the interior spaces and the acquisition of our newest Progar painting which is on loan from Sussex County Vocational Technical School (see pages 4–5). Our guests were treated to homemade holiday cookies and delicious punch made by Pat Shannon. Many thanks to Sharon Disharoon for organizing the event.

Thank you to all who have contributed to our 2025–2026 Annual Appeal, which funds many of the society's day-to-day expenses, including the printing and mailing of this newsletter. It's never too late to give; please consider sending a donation to help us continue the important work of preserving and celebrating the history of Laurel. You'll find a form on page 10. You can also donate via our website, laureldehistoricalsociety.org.

We have scheduled many events for this year, beginning with our annual meeting on January 25th, a special series of limited-seating gatherings at Rosemont, a bus trip to the National Museum of African American History & Culture on February 28th, the spring fundraising dinner, our second annual children's Easter egg hunt... and many more. Follow our Facebook page for the latest updates and other interesting content.

Enjoy your newsletter! 

IN THIS ISSUE: News, Upcoming Events in '26, Progar's *Country Auction*, February Bus Trip, Annual Appeal and Membership Renewal, and more! →



ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 25TH

2:00 P.M.

ABBOTT'S ON BROAD CREEK

LIMITED SEATING

SOUP SAMPLIN' SUNDAY SOCIAL

Sunday, February 15th • 4:00 p.m.

\$25



Rosemont



\$25

RSVP w/ George Denney

302-745-1963

Brian Shannon Reflects on Service to Laurel, Retires from LRC



The society's fall dinner, held at Abbott's on Broad Creek on Saturday, October 18th, became bittersweet as guest speaker Brian Shannon announced his retirement from the Laurel Redevelopment Corporation after 26 years. He gave a presentation about the nonprofit group's many projects—including the venue itself—in Laurel from the 1990s through today.

One of Brian's final accomplishments was assisting with the LRC's sale of Rosemont to the Laurel Historical Society. In his well-deserved retirement, he plans to remain an active realtor and enjoy his hobbies, including classic cars and model trains. 



Photos courtesy of Paula Shannon.

Progar's *Country Auction* Comes Home

Sussex County Vocational Technical School District has signed an agreement with the Laurel Historical Society to loan a painting, *The Country Auction* by Henry M. Progar, to the society for a period of five years. The painting depicts an auction at Hearn's Crossroads in 1962, and was a gift to the school district from Bettie Evans.

The partnership allows the society to expand its growing Progar collection, which showcases the work of this well-known regional artist. A graduate of Pennsylvania State University with a master's degree in education, Progar (1927–1982) taught art at Laurel High School. Most of his popular paintings depict Delmarva landscapes and buildings. *The Country Auction* is noteworthy for the crowd of people.

The Laurel Historical Society welcomed local officials, society members, and the public to a free open house at Rosemont on Sunday, November 30th, to celebrate the painting's homecoming, as well as the society's acquisition of the 18th-century house. The former home of



Laurel Historical Society president George Denney welcomes Sussex Tech district superintendent Dr. Kevin Carson to Rosemont.

Governor Nathaniel Mitchell was transformed into a veritable Progar art gallery with several of the artist's works on display. 





Photos courtesy of Paula Shannon.

Bus Trip to African American History Museum

After a six-year break from bus trips, the Laurel Historical Society will travel to the National Museum of African American History & Culture on Saturday, February 28th, in celebration of Black History Month.

Located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., the museum opened in 2016. Part of the Smithsonian Institution, it is the world's largest African-American history museum, and has more than 40,000 artifacts in its collections, several thousand of which are on display at any given time.

The cost of the trip is \$75 per attendee, and non-members are welcome. The bus (or buses, depending on the number of attendees) will depart from Laurel

Elementary School, 815 S. Central Avenue, at 8:30 a.m. Plan to arrive earlier!

While touring the museum, attendees may purchase lunch at the highly-rated Sweet Home Café, which features a wide variety of traditional, authentic African-American dishes.

The trip will include a stop for attendees to purchase dinner before returning to Laurel in the evening.

Please register before February 15th by clipping the form on page 7 and mailing it with payment to the Laurel Historical Society, P.O. Box 102, Laurel, DE, 19956. After February 15th, please call or text George Denney at 302-745-1963. 





National Museum of
African American History & Culture
—
Washington, D.C.

Bus Trip

Saturday, February 28, 2026

Departure at 8:30 a.m.

Park at Laurel Elementary School
815 S. Central Ave

\$75 per attendee



Please mail this form with \$75 per attendee to the Laurel Historical Society, P. O. Box 102, Laurel, DE, 19956. Questions? Contact President George Denney at 302-745-1963.



Name(s): _____

Number of people: _____ Total: \$ _____



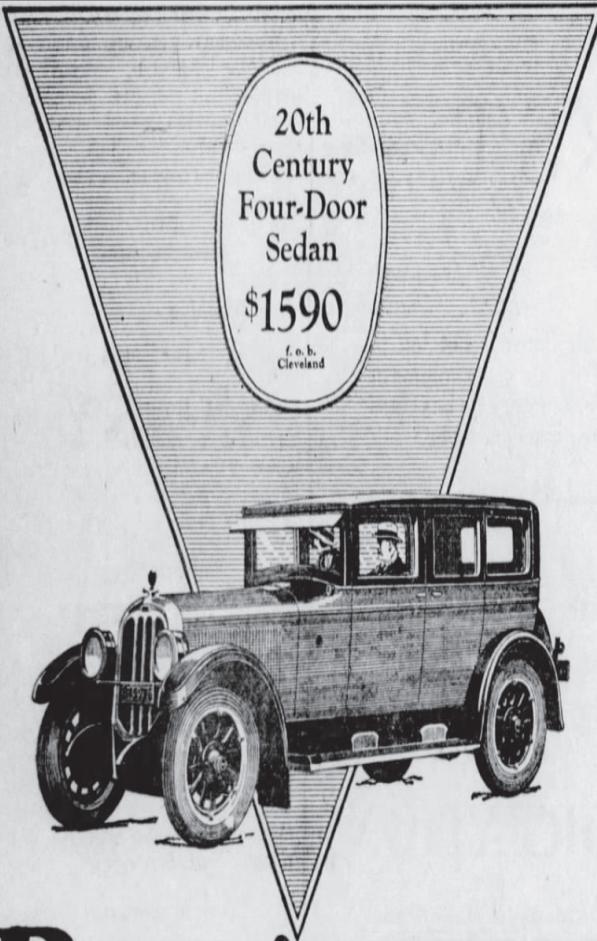
• UPCOMING EVENTS •

January 25	•	Annual Meeting	•	Abbott's on Broad Creek	•	2:00 p.m.
February 15	•	Soup Samplin' Sunday Social <i>20 seats—RSVP ASAP!</i>	•	Rosemont	•	4:00 p.m.
February 28	•	Bus Trip <i>See pages 4–5</i>	•	National Museum of African American History	•	8:30 a.m.
March	•	Social	•	Rosemont	•	<i>to be announced</i>
March	•	Spring Dinner	•	<i>to be announced</i>	•	<i>to be announced</i>
April 4	•	Easter Egg Hunt	•	Hitchens Homestead	•	10:00 a.m.
April 11	•	Laurel Heritage Day	•	Multiple Locations	•	<i>to be announced</i>
May 3	•	Museums Open	•	All Museums	•	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
May 9	•	Paint Laurel Plein Air	•	<i>to be announced</i>	•	a.m.
June 7	•	Museums Open	•	All Museums	•	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
July 5	•	Museums Open	•	All Museums	•	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
August 2	•	Museums Open	•	All Museums	•	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
September 6	•	Museums Open	•	All Museums	•	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
October 4	•	Museums Open	•	All Museums	•	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
October	•	Fall Dinner	•	<i>to be announced</i>	•	p.m.
October 31	•	Trick or Treating	•	Rosemont	•	p.m.
November 1	•	Museums Open	•	<i>to be announced</i>	•	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
December 6	•	Christmas Party	•	Rosemont	•	2:00 p.m.

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

[FACEBOOK.COM/LAURELDEHISTORICALSOCIETY](https://www.facebook.com/LaurelDeHistoricalSociety)

««« OLD NEWS »»»



Progress
Wears the Chandler Name-Plate

The Evening Journal,
Wilmington, Del.
MARCH 23, 1926



AMONG today's closed cars, as you see them all and compare them, Chandler is notably modern.

Take bodies, for instance. Chandler has created a group of fascinating body styles—bodies wrought with such studied care that even the most trifling details contribute to perfection—rich inside, rich outside, designed for beauty and comfort—built for year-after-year endurance.

Take the chassis. Here Chandler has stopped at nothing to provide great strength without undue weight, and has endowed this chassis with probably the greatest centralized system of lubrication ever invented—the "One Shot" System!

Progress is further exemplified in Chandler's famous Pikes Peak Motor.

The Chassis Has the "One Shot" Lubrication System!

The fact deserves stressing—for it means a vast advantage to owners. One press of your heel on a plunger automatically shoots a fresh dose of lubricant into every bearing and bush-

The engineers have groomed this superb motor to be supreme in power. As a sample of performance, a Chandler recently broke all records on the course at Muroc Lake, California—running a mile in 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ seconds, an average of 115 $\frac{1}{3}$ miles an hour!

Now prices. To make quality talk price, as Chandler does, is another kind of progress—and no doubt more welcome than anything else.

There is the new Twentieth Century Sedan, here pictured, at \$1590—a rich 4-door Sedan priced less than a 2-door Coach! There is the new Metropolitan Sedan De Luxe at \$1895; the new Seven-Passenger Sedan at \$1995; the new Brougham at \$1695—all of which represent large reductions! Prices f. o. b. Cleveland. See-drive—compare!

ing in the entire chassis. That is real progress. It is also real efficiency. It is also real economy. "One Shot" saves money and labor, and greatly prolongs the life of the car.

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The Evening Journal,
Wilmington, Del.
FEBRUARY 27, 1926



FILLING STATION BURNED
Special to The Evening Journal
LAUREL, Del., March 23.—John Gootees' filling station, near Laurel, was destroyed last night by fire of undetermined origin. Mr. Gootees, whose home is near the station, was awakened by an explosion and instantly the building was a mass of flames. Mr. Gootees' loss was \$1500 with no insurance. The Sinclair Oil Co. lost \$500.

OUR 2025-2026 DONORS

as of
1/7/26

RECORDS' POND — \$10,000+

Paul & Pat Downes
Steven Quillin

TRAP POND — \$5,000 - \$9,999

—

Ned & Norma Jean Fowler
Karl & Triss Holland
Gary Leslie
Shirley O'Neal
Vern & Margaret Proctor
Beverly Warrington Smith
Donald & Anna Ward

TRUSSUM POND — \$500 - \$999

Marlene Collins
Kendal T. Jones
Dan & Mary LeCates
Chris & MaryKay Mitchell
Chris & Crystal Slavens
Blair Whaley & Amy Lowe
Wash N' Vac Car Wash

PORTSVILLE POND — \$250 - \$499

William Allen
Dee Cross
Donna Gordy
Billie Jane Wheatley

HORSEY'S POND: \$100 - \$249

William Acker
Matthew & Dona Blaine
Marlene Elliott Brown
Denise Carmine Crowe
Snicky Davis & Brian Seeba
Woody & Sharon Disharoon
Wendy Dolby
Craig Elliott
Yancey Hillegas
Jerry Eller & Faye Ellis Jones-Eller
Mary Jones
Linda Justice
Lynn Lyburn
Elizabeth Milo
Thomas & Joy Slavens
Dave Smith's Exterminating
Cindy Whaley
Janet Windsor
Thomas & Mona Wright

TUSSOCK POND: \$25 - \$99

Donna Adams
James & Nancy Brock
William & Carlene Campbell
Cherie Clark
Edwin A. Connor
Marc & Kathy Decker
Donald Haines
Barbara Joseph & Lee Ann Geist
Michael & Debra McElroy
Gary & Carole Mitchell
Sierra Spicer-Zimmerman
Bob & Lauretta Thompson

Thank
you!



P. O. Box 102
Laurel, DE 19956

Annual Appeal

CATEGORY	LEVEL	SELECT YOUR LEVEL OF SUPPORT
Records' Pond	\$10,000+	_____
Trap Pond	\$5,000 - \$9,999	_____
Chipman's Pond	\$1,000 - \$4,999	_____
Trussum Pond	\$500 - \$999	_____
Portsville Pond	\$250 - \$499	_____
Horsey's Pond	\$100 - \$249	_____
Tussock Pond	\$25 - \$99	_____

It's never too late to give! Please mail your 2025-2026 donation to the address shown above, or you can make a donation by visiting our website at laureldehistoricalsociety.org and clicking on the Donate button.





Rosemont



The Hitchens Homestead



The Mill-Hand House



Laurel Heritage Museum



Please complete form and mail with check payable to Laurel Historical Society, P.O. Box 102, Laurel, DE, 19956 — or pay online at laureldehistoricalsociety.org.



LAUREL HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2026 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

By becoming a member of the Laurel Historical Society, you are part of a living, vital organization that is giving back to its community. As a member, you show you care about greater Laurel and publicly support the goal of protecting and preserving our heritage for generations to come.

Learn about Laurel's past, have fun in the present, and prepare for the future!

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON IN 2026

- Restoring Rosemont, the Hitchens Homestead, and the Phillips House
- Creating new museum exhibits
- Cataloging our collection items
- Regular social media posts and discussions
- Website updates
- Documenting day-to-day life in Laurel for future generations
- Planning new and interesting programs and experiences
- Tri-yearly print newsletters
- Building community relationships

MEMBERSHIP RATES JANUARY – DECEMBER

Individual (\$30.00) _____ Family (\$50.00) _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Type of Membership: New _____ Renewal _____

WE APPRECIATE VOLUNTEERS!

What special skills can you offer the society?

<input type="checkbox"/> computer skills	<input type="checkbox"/> graphic design
<input type="checkbox"/> house cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/> maintenance and repairs
<input type="checkbox"/> yard maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> baking / food preparation
<input type="checkbox"/> publicity	<input type="checkbox"/> research
<input type="checkbox"/> officer or board member	<input type="checkbox"/> carpentry, plumbing, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> telephoning	<input type="checkbox"/> museum hosting
<input type="checkbox"/> public speaking	<input type="checkbox"/> event planning
<input type="checkbox"/> writing content	<input type="checkbox"/> cataloging / accessioning



P. O. Box 102
Laurel, DE 19956

Please join us at our annual meeting on Sunday, January 25th, 2:00 p.m., at Abbott's on Broad Creek.

It's time to renew your membership!

Please complete and mail in the enclosed membership renewal form,
or bring it to our annual meeting at Abbott's on January 25th.*

Forms are also available online at laureldehistoricalsociety.org.

*Excluding lifetime members.